

mercury compound used annually in manufacturing the product will be handled as confidential by the agency under 21 CFR 20.61. General comments on this call-for-data should be addressed to the Dockets Management Branch (address above). General comments are to be identified with the docket number found in brackets in the heading of this document. Received general comments may be seen in the Dockets Management Branch between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Dated: April 21, 1999.

**William K. Hubbard,**

*Acting Deputy Commissioner for Policy.*

[FR Doc. 99-10697 Filed 4-28-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. 98E-0614]

#### Determination of Regulatory Review Period for Purposes of Patent Extension; Amerge™

**AGENCY:** Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has determined the regulatory review period for Amerge™ and is publishing this notice of that determination as required by law. FDA has made the determination because of the submission of an application to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Department of Commerce, for the extension of a patent which claims that human drug product.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments and petitions should be directed to the Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Brian J. Malkin, Office of Health Affairs (HFY-20), Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857, 301-827-6620.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Drug Price Competition and Patent Term Restoration Act of 1984 (Pub. L. 98-417) and the Generic Animal Drug and Patent Term Restoration Act (Pub. L. 100-670) generally provide that a patent may be extended for a period of up to 5 years so long as the patented item (human drug product, animal drug product,

medical device, food additive, or color additive) was subject to regulatory review by FDA before the item was marketed. Under these acts, a product's regulatory review period forms the basis for determining the amount of extension an applicant may receive.

A regulatory review period consists of two periods of time: A testing phase and an approval phase. For human drug products, the testing phase begins when the exemption to permit the clinical investigations of the drug becomes effective and runs until the approval phase begins. The approval phase starts with the initial submission of an application to market the human drug product and continues until FDA grants permission to market the drug product. Although only a portion of a regulatory review period may count toward the actual amount of extension that the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks may award (for example, half the testing phase must be subtracted as well as any time that may have occurred before the patent was issued), FDA's determination of the length of a regulatory review period for a human drug product will include all of the testing phase and approval phase as specified in 35 U.S.C. 156(g)(1)(B).

FDA recently approved for marketing the human drug product Amerge™ (naratriptan hydrochloride). Amerge™ is indicated for the acute treatment of migraine attacks with or without aura in adults. Subsequent to this approval, the Patent and Trademark Office received a patent term restoration application for Amerge™ (U.S. Patent No. 4,997,841) from Glaxo Wellcome, Inc., and the Patent and Trademark Office requested FDA's assistance in determining this patent's eligibility for patent term restoration. In a letter dated September 28, 1998, FDA advised the Patent and Trademark Office that this human drug product had undergone a regulatory review period and that the approval of Amerge™ represented the first permitted commercial marketing or use of the product. Shortly thereafter, the Patent and Trademark Office requested that FDA determine the product's regulatory review period.

FDA has determined that the applicable regulatory review period for Amerge™ is 953 days. Of this time, 519 days occurred during the testing phase of the regulatory review period, 434 days occurred during the approval phase. These periods of time were derived from the following dates:

1. *The date an exemption under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug,*

*and Cosmetic Act (the act) (21 U.S.C. 355) became effective:* July 5, 1995. FDA has verified the applicant's claim that the date the investigational new drug application became effective was on July 5, 1995.

2. *The date the application was initially submitted with respect to the human drug product under section 505 of the act:* December 4, 1996. FDA has verified the applicant's claim that the new drug application (NDA) for Amerge™ (NDA 20-763) was initially submitted on December 4, 1996.

3. *The date the application was approved:* February 10, 1998. FDA has verified the applicant's claim that NDA 20-763 was approved on February 10, 1998.

This determination of the regulatory review period establishes the maximum potential length of a patent extension. However, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office applies several statutory limitations in its calculations of the actual period for patent extension. In its application for patent extension, this applicant seeks 693 days of patent term extension.

Anyone with knowledge that any of the dates as published is incorrect may, on or before June 28, 1999, submit to the Dockets Management Branch (address above) written comments and ask for a redetermination. Furthermore, any interested person may petition FDA, on or before October 26, 1999, for a determination regarding whether the applicant for extension acted with due diligence during the regulatory review period. To meet its burden, the petition must contain sufficient facts to merit an FDA investigation. (See H. Rept. 857, part 1, 98th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 41-42, 1984.) Petitions should be in the format specified in 21 CFR 10.30.

Comments and petitions should be submitted to the Dockets Management Branch (address above) in three copies (except that individuals may submit single copies) and identified with the docket number found in brackets in the heading of this document. Comments and petitions may be seen in the Dockets Management Branch between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Dated: April 20, 1999.

**Thomas J. McGinnis,**

*Deputy Associate Commissioner for Health Affairs.*

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